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Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

Saint Mary's College of California

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Student Complaints Policy and Procedure

This protocol gives instructions for addressing student complaints which are not otherwise covered in any subject-matter-specific grievance, complaint or appeal policy applicable to the student.

Students at Saint Mary's College of California may report a concern or complaint regarding any area of academic or student life without fear of coercion, harassment, intimidation, or reprisal from the College or any of its employees. Students have the right to expect a timely response to a complaint. Every effort will be made to resolve matters fairly and promptly. If additional follow-up and investigation is warranted, Saint Mary's will attempt to conduct the additional follow-up in a timely manner so as to not unduly delay the resolution of the complaint.

Because no single process can serve the wide range of possible complaints, Saint Mary's College provides specific processes for responding to certain kinds of student complaints. Where College policy provides a specific complaint or grievance procedure, an aggrieved student must use that procedure. As a general guide, students should refer to the Undergraduate or Graduate and Professional Student Handbooks. Students are made aware of the Student Handbooks via email at the beginning of the fall semester.

The following are some examples of established procedures for specific types of student complaints found in the Student Handbooks:

- Bias Incident or Hate Crime
- Discipline process
- Discrimination or Harassment
- Grades and other Academic Complaints Procedures
- Student Disability Accommodations

Any student at Saint Mary's who has a complaint that directly implicates the College's program of education should do the following:

1. Submit the complaint in writing to the Dean of Students. This correspondence must be submitted in one of the following ways:
 - Electronic mail – dos@stmarys-ca.edu
 - Postal mail - Dean of Students, Ferroggiaro 200, PMB 4327, Moraga, CA 94575
 - Fax - 925-377-0493
 - Or online form: <http://www.stmarys-ca.edu/student-life/your-safety-resources/dean-of-students>

2. The correspondence should describe in detail the behavior, program, process, or other matter that is the subject of the complaint, and should explain how the matter implicates the College's program of education.
3. For a response to take place, the complaint must contain the complaining student's name, student ID#, Saint Mary's email address, and current mailing address.
4. The Dean of Students will acknowledge the complaint within three business days of receipt of the written complaint. Acknowledgment may be made by electronic mail, postal service, fax or by personal delivery, at the discretion of the Dean of Students.
5. Within three weeks of acknowledgment of the complaint, the Dean of Students or designee, shall either meet with the complaining student, or respond to the substance of the complaint in writing. If further investigation is needed, the correspondence will indicate so and will also indicate when the investigation is anticipated to be completed. Upon completion of the initial review and any further investigation, if needed, Saint Mary's will provide the student with a substantive response regarding the final disposition of the complaint.
6. Appeals regarding decisions on complaints should be addressed to the Vice Provost of Student Life. Any decision made on appeal by the Vice Provost of Student Life shall be final.
7. A copy of the complaint and a summary of the process and resolution of the complaint shall be kept in the Office of the Dean of Students via a secure electronic filing system for a period of four years from the date of final resolution of the complaint.

Any reports, questions or concerns can be directed to the Dean of Students at 925-631-4238; dos@stmarys-ca.edu. **Please note that this procedure is not designed to address imminent emergencies.** If you have an emergency to report, please call Public Safety at 925-631-4282.

Any student may contact the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education for review of a complaint. The bureau may be contacted at 2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 400, Sacramento, CA 95833, <http://www.bppe.ca.gov>, 916-431-6924 (telephone), or 916-263-1897 (fax).